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March 16th, 2017

Community Strategies Grant Program
Attn: Ms. Lauren Nissen
421 W Riverside Ave #606
Spokane, WA 99201

Dear Ms. Nissen,

The ISAAC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit established to enhance the lives of its region's autism community through educational, emotional, and financial support programs so that individuals with autism and their families are given the tools needed to be active, secure, and engaged members of our community. The ISAAC Foundation has 10 years experience, including helping first responders and youth with autism learn to interact with one another. Youth with autism are seven times more likely to have an emergency-based interaction with a first responder, and the ISAAC Foundation is the only regional organization with the goal to develop an emergency preparedness program curriculum that will specially benefit the relationship between youth with autism and first responders. We are requesting \$10,000 to build this curriculum that will focus on the development of skills among these individuals.

The First Responder Training Curriculum is designed to equip youth affected by autism with the skills to appropriately interact with first responders. The ISAAC Foundation will partner with the Cheney School District, the district's law enforcement and firefighters, a WSU research professor, and a board-certified behavioral analyst to develop and pilot a student-centered first responder training curriculum. Through our program, we are able to create and build crucial relationships between first responders and the ASD community.

The ISAAC Foundation commits and continually seeks out ways to provide support for educational, emotional, and therapeutic needs for thousands of individuals and families in the Inland Northwest. With the support of the Community Strategies Grant Program, our organization will be able to provide the much needed education and developed relationships between these groups. I thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration, and look forward to building a relationship with you in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

[Insert Holly's Signature Here]

Holly Lytle, Executive Director
Attachments



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PROPOSAL

to the

Community Strategies Grant Program
421 W Riverside Ave #606
Spokane, WA 99201

Submitted by

The ISAAC Foundation
P.O. Box 19202
Spokane, WA 99219

Title: Improving First Response Outcomes with Special Needs Youth

Period of Performance: August 2018 - June 2019

Date Submitted: xx/xx/xxxx

Principal Investigator: Mrs. Holly Lytle, Executive Director

Amount Requested: \$10,000

Signed: *[Insert Holly's Signature Here]*

Principal Investigator:

Holly Lytle
Executive Director
(509) 325-1515
Holly@TheISAACFoundation.org

Authorizing Official:

Lauren Nissen
Community Strategies Grant Program
421 W Riverside Ave #606
Spokane, WA 99201

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Improving First Response Outcomes with Special Needs Youth

Project Abstract

The ISAAC Foundation is developing a curriculum with the objective of equipping youth affected by autism with the skills to appropriately interact with first responders. The objective is that by the end of the 2018-2019 school year, these students will become comfortable with interacting with first responders. This curriculum is based on the success of the existing Station Visit Program which allow the children and their families to come to the fire station and interact with the first responders. Funding of \$10,000 is requested for personalized standees, a training video for teachers, the development of the curriculum, and other direct and indirect costs.

Organizational Statement

The ISAAC Foundation, located in Spokane, WA, is a grassroots 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Spokane, Washington. The foundation's mission is to enhance the lives of its region's autism community through educational, emotional and financial support programs so that individuals with autism and their families are given the tools needed to be active, secure, and engaged members of our community.

In 2007, Holly Lytle founded the ISAAC Foundation in memory of her son, Isaac, who passed away unexpectedly on February 8, 2007. The ISAAC Foundation currently supports the educational, emotional, and therapeutic needs of hundreds of individuals and families in the Inland Northwest. The organization began with a single Therapy Grant Program, but has since expanded to provide nine different programs that help families touched by autism. The programs that the ISAAC Foundation offer primarily cater to youth with autism, but also offer support to siblings and parents of children with autism.

Community recognition and support can be seen from the success of the fundraisers hosted by the ISAAC Foundation. In February of 2017, the ISAAC Foundation raised \$74,773 during their 10th annual Taste of Hope Auction. The organization's Station Visit, ISAAC Alert, and First Responder training programs have received recognition from the Spokesman-Review, KXLY Spokane, and KHQ Right Now. In 2010, the ISAAC Foundation was named Organization of the Year by ARC of Spokane. Holly Lytle, the executive director of the ISAAC Foundation, was named one of the 20 best business professionals under 40 in Spokane by the Inland Business Catalyst.

The ISAAC Foundation has received donations of \$2500 from Thrivent Financial, \$5000 from Spokane Firefighters, and \$2500 from INB Bank. Spokane firemen and police officers have volunteered their time and funds to help the ISAAC Foundation accomplish their mission of helping local individuals and families affected by autism. Spokane law enforcement has invested in the ISAAC Foundation's website that functions as a database

to track ISAAC Alerts and sends automatic emails detailing progress and data from the Autism in the Wild programs to Spokane law enforcement.

The ISAAC Foundation has plans to develop a K-12 Skill-Building Curriculum for Special Needs First Response Encounters that will be implemented in the Cheney School District upon completion. If the pilot program proves itself effective, other K-12 schools will have the opportunity to buy the license for the curriculum.

This ISAAC Foundation is accomplished and fully prepared to carry out this project. No organization in Washington State has attempted to develop a curriculum comparable to the one the ISAAC Foundation is prepared to develop. The ISAAC Foundation has the perfect staff members and community partners necessary to carry out this project with success. Each staff member and community partner has the credentials to prove they are suited for their role as well as a commitment to make the curriculum a reality.

The Need for First Responder Training Programs

For many parents of children affected by autism, one of their biggest fears is what will happen when their child encounters a first responder and the child does not have anyone to advocate for them. Individuals affected by autism are seven times more likely than those not affected to have interactions with first responders, however, interactions between individuals with autism and first responders can be challenging. When confronted with first responders, individuals affected by autism may not respond appropriately to a uniform, badge, or other emergency response symbol; avoid eye contact; make repetitive motions or sounds; become upset when touched; not provide I.D. when asked; lack awareness of danger; continue to do something after being told to stop; appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs; become self-injurious; or, become aggressive.¹

Cases such as Otto Zehm, a 36-year-old Spokane man with an intellectual disability who was killed by a Spokane police officer, demonstrate the unnecessary escalation that can happen when first responders and individuals with autism lack adequate skills to interact with one another. Two women called 911 to report Zehm after they mistakenly believed he had stolen their money from an ATM. Shortly after, law enforcement confronted Zehm who was shopping inside of a convenience store. The officer responsible for Zehm's death claimed that he felt threatened by Zehm's demeanor and believed he could have used the two-liter of soda he was holding as a weapon. After being restrained on the ground, Zehm began thrashing on the floor provoking the officer to use more force against him and increase the severity of restraint. Surveillance videos show that Zehm's behavior was not assaultive toward the officers, but resistant after being tackled onto the ground. The law

¹ Gammicchia, C., & Johnson, C. (n.d.). Information for Law Enforcement and Other First Responders (Rep.). Retrieved February 24, 2017, from Autism Society website: https://www.autismspeaks.org/docs/family_services_docs/LawEnforcement.pdf

enforcement officer's inability to utilize effective strategies to assess the situation and defuse led the officer to believe that Zehm was a threat.

Unfortunately, Zehm's case is not unusual; an analysis of the 2013-2015 media coverage reporting death by police force suggests that half of individuals killed by police suffer from a disability. Of the 282 reviewed reports involving police violence toward disabled individuals, 21.6% cases involved individuals affected by autism, down syndrome, and intellectual and developmental disabilities, accounting for 61 incidents.²

Following the tragedies involving unnecessary conflict escalation between first responders and individuals with autism and similar mental disabilities, training on mental disabilities for many of the offending departments have increased. The increasing amount of incidents involving life-threatening altercations between first responders and individuals with autism has unveiled an urgent need for effective preventative training. Programs that simultaneously train first responders and individuals with autism to interact during an emergency allow both of the involved parties to develop the skills necessary to avoid an unnecessary escalation of conflict. For individuals with autism, it is important to develop those skills at a young age before they become full-grown adults who will be perceived as a greater threat by first responders in the event of conflict.

In October of 2015, the ISAAC Foundation partnered with Spokane firefighters and law enforcement to offer station visits to special needs individuals and their neurotypical friends and family. During the visits, the participants are taught four skills: give first responders fist bumps, not hugs; get into the back of an emergency vehicle, not the front; show first responders the front of their body, not back; and give first responders bubble space. Participants also had the opportunity to become familiar with the different uniforms of first responders and become desensitized to emergency vehicles and uniforms. In its first year of operation, 24 individuals with special needs and 14 neurotypical individuals utilized the program. Of the participants with special needs, 33.3% showed deflative behavior toward first responders or activities at one or more visits while another 20.8% had a meltdown that required de-escalation strategies.

Currently there are very few programs available to individuals with autism that work to familiarize them with the different first responders and teach them how to appropriately interact with them. Although public schools in the U.S. are responsible for educating 513,700 individuals with autism [aged 3-21]³, there is no required curriculum that includes behavioral training for emergency situations that may happen outside of the classroom.

² Perry, D. M., & Long, L. C. (2016, March). The Ruderman White Paper on Media Coverage of Law Enforcement Use of Force and Disability (Rep.). Retrieved February 20, 2017, from Ruderman Family Foundation website: <http://www.rudermanfoundation.org/news-and-events/ruderman-white-paper>

³ Department of Education (2017). Children And Youth With Disabilities Served By Type Of Disability: 2000 To 2014 [Education Programs, Selected Years, As Of Fall] ProQuest Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 2017 Online Edition. Retrieved from <http://statabs.proquest.com/sa/docview.html?table-no=229&acc-no=C7095-1.3&year=2017&z=A803DA7CBBC507B95C0C7F6B13113A23052DB572>

Unless students have access to community programs that provide training for interacting with first responders, they will not have the opportunity to develop skills to properly communicate with first responders.

The Cheney community is one of the many that does not offer any emergency training programs for individuals affected by autism. Due to the high rate of poverty recorded in Cheney households⁴, it is unlikely that the majority of Cheney families affected by autism possess reliable transportation and scheduling ability to regularly attend the once-a-month station visits offered in Spokane. Offering emergency training activities for youth affected by autism in public schools ensures that all students have access to the resources to develop critical skills regardless of location or income.

Goals & Objectives

The goal of the ISAAC Foundation's First Responder Training Program is to develop and implement a first responder curriculum for grades K-12 to help children with autism and first responders interact through the use of station visits and classroom activities.

Objectives

- Meet with the staff members of the ISAAC Foundation and discuss timelines and actions for the curriculum, including the standees, training video, and first responder training.
- Deploy the curriculum material into the classrooms and follow the timeline and actions appropriately.
- Collect the data from the results of each activity throughout the curriculum for analysis by Dr. Swineford from Washington State University (WSU).
- Increase the levels of familiarity of 80% (anticipating strong variations in severity of disability) of K-12 students with autism in the Cheney School District with first responders from the Cheney Police and the Fire District within one school year.
- Increase the levels of familiarity of 80% (depending on volunteerism) of first responders from the Cheney Police and the Fire district with K-12 students with autism in the Cheney School District within one school year.

⁴ QuickFacts Cheney City, Washington. (n.d.). Retrieved February 22, 2017, from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/INC110215/5311825>

Methods

Preparing the Curriculum

In order to prepare a successful curriculum for implementation in the Cheney School District, the following steps will be taken:

- Meet with a board certified behavioral analyst (BCBA), Jeffrey Kalles, to go over the data from the current station visits and begin to outline the curriculum and its format.
- Acquire the custom printed standees with images of the regional first responder uniforms based on the school they will be placed in and the corresponding uniforms of first responders.
- Create a training video for teachers, both general and special education, to prepare them for the curriculum.
- Train the first responders independently, within the appropriate stations.

Curriculum Deployment

Once the curriculum has been developed, the curriculum will be delivered to throughout the Cheney School District. A successful deployment will include the following:

- Introduce the curriculum to the 25 special education classrooms in Cheney.
- Set up first in-class visits from first responders (spontaneous visits) and record data of the visit.
- Set up second spontaneous visit and record the data of the visit.

Assessment and Revision

Data from the pilot program will be collected and compiled. Dr. Swineford, a research professor at the Washington State University School of Medicine, will analyze the data and assess the curriculum, recommending potential improvements. The curriculum will be revised based on Dr. Swineford's recommendations.

Staff & Administration

This curriculum program will employ two part-time and two full-time staff members to be pulled from the existing ISAAC Foundation staff.

- Executive Director (full-time) — Responsible for directing and maintaining the structure of the ISAAC Foundation, including the programs such as First Responders Training Program, Station Visit Days, and Emergency Preparedness Workshop for Parents and Caregivers. The Executive Director is Holly Lytle.

- Developmental Director (full-time) — Responsible for assisting the executive director directly with her job duties. They will coordinate the events and programs, manage the volunteer personnel, be the main point of contact for all inquiries, and oversee all operations. The Developmental Director will be Jessica Silvernail.
- Board-Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA) (part-time) — Responsible for helping develop and pilot the student-centered first responder training curriculum by going over the data from the current station visits to begin to outline the curriculum and its format. The BCBA will be Jeffrey Kalles.
- Research & Analysis (part-time) — Responsible for assessing and analyzing data gathered from the results of each activity and formative assessment throughout the curriculum, and recommend potential improvements.

Evaluation Plan

The ISAAC Foundation will evaluate behavioral changes in participants to measure effectiveness.

The student's progress will be measured by assessing five specifically taught skills. Students will be assessed based on the following abilities:

- to practice giving fist bumps to the first responders and avoiding approaching responders to hug them.
- to respect the first responder's personal space, or "bubble space" as they will know it.
- to practice getting into the back of an emergency vehicle and not the front.
- to show the responders the front of their body at all times and avoid turning away from the responders.
- to respond positively and calmly, without fear or anxiety to first responders' uniforms and vehicles

Prior to the deployment, the ISAAC Foundation will facilitate the first two first responder visits to the school. The first visit will be spontaneous so that it can be used to measure the baseline for each student's reaction to an unexpected interaction with first responders. That first visit will take place three weeks into the course after both the students and the first responders have had a chance to receive some independent training. A second visit will be scheduled six weeks into the course and will measure each student's ability to retain the four major skills independently.

The special education teachers in the Cheney schools will be responsible for teaching the curriculum, but the ISAAC Foundation will be conducting the assessments to collect data that will be sent to WSU research professor Dr. Lauren Swineford for analysis and data collection, recommending improvements or changes. The curriculum will be revised based on Dr. Swineford's recommendations.

At the end of the 2018-2019 school year, Dr. Swineford will analyze and interpret the data collected and work with Mrs. Lytle, executive director, and Mr. Kalles, BCBA, to make adjustments to the curriculum for the upcoming year. If the pilot program is a success, students participating in the program will retain the skills learned in the course and be able to demonstrate their knowledge independently.

Sustainability

The ISAAC Foundation's First Responder Training Curriculum model is built to be self-sustaining. After the curriculum has been developed, schools who wish to adopt the program will be charged a base curriculum licensing fee of \$385 from the ISAAC Foundation. The curriculum package will include the one-hour teacher training video. As with most curriculum adopted by schools, the school will be responsible for paying for the necessary supporting materials as well. One customized standee will be necessary for each classroom costing \$125 per standee. The only recurring cost to schools adopting the curriculum will be the cost of lost or damages standees.

The revenue generated from the curriculum licensing fees will be used to develop more resources for the curriculum, such as educational apps and videos that can further enhance student learning. A portion of the revenue will be used to maintain the subsection of the ISAAC Foundation website that will provide student resources pertinent to the curriculum.

Currently, no public schools offer an accredited emergency preparedness curriculum that mutually focuses on the development of skills in youth with autism and first responders, so the curriculum the ISAAC Foundation will be developing will be the only of its type. Given the uniqueness of the curriculum, the ISAAC Foundation will be able to reach many schools who have identified a need for a similar program, but do not currently have access to one.

Budget

First Responder Training Curriculum Budget

Materials and Personnel	Total Program Budget
Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)	\$3,200
Marketing	\$600
Website Maintenance	\$900
Administration	\$800
Staff	\$1,500
Training Videos	\$500
Standees	\$3,100
Total	\$9,800

Budget Narrative

The majority of the costs come from the cost to work with the board certified behavioral analyst (BCBA) to develop a strong, effective accredited curriculum. His expertise in the behavior of children who fall on the autism spectrum will allow him to create a strong curriculum that takes into consideration the variations in behavior from one child to the next, as all children are affected differently.

The standees account for the second largest portion of the curriculum; The standees will be life-sized cutouts customized with the uniforms of local first responders. They are a large expense due to their customization and needing to be made of a durable plastic to withstand any aggressive handling from the children. The durable plastic, while more expensive, will stand up to use much longer than a cardboard cutout.

Executive Summary

The ISAAC Foundation was established as a 501(c)(3) organization in 2007 by Holly Lytle following the death of her son, Isaac, who was affected by autism. Having raised two children affected by autism, Mrs. Lytle was more than familiar with the struggles families affected by autism face and sought to help those families in her community. The ISAAC foundation's mission is to enhance the lives of its region's autism community through educational, emotional and financial support programs so that individuals with autism and

their families are given the tools needed to be active, secure and engaged members of our community.

An issue in the autism community that is slowly gaining recognition is the difficulty of interactions between first responders and individuals affected by autism. Individuals with autism are seven times more likely than neurotypical individuals to use emergency services, but there are numerous characteristics common of individuals with autism that can be misinterpreted by first responders leading to unnecessary escalation of conflict.

In order to address this issue, the ISAAC Foundation will partner with the Cheney School District, the regions law enforcement and firefighters, WSU research professor Dr. Lauren Swineford, and board certified behavioral analyst Jeffery Kalles to develop and pilot a student-centered first responder training curriculum. The First Responder Training Curriculum will teach youth with autism four important skills to promote safe interactions with first responders: give fist bumps, not hugs; respect bubble space; get in the back of an emergency vehicle, not front; and show first responders the front of their body, not back.

The overall goal of the program is to equip youth affected by autism with the skills to appropriately interact with first responders. One of the program's primary objectives to achieve the goal is to implement the First Responder Training curriculum into 25 special education classrooms in the Cheney School District and measure the progress of participating students throughout the school year. Success for the program will be measured by the students' ability to independently retain the skills they are taught.

The First Responder Training Curriculum is not a new concept for the ISAAC Foundation; The foundation hosts multiple programs that address the safety concerns of interactions between first responders and individuals with autism. The ISAAC Foundation has helped 80 individuals register for the ISAAC Alert, a program that allows families of individuals touched by autism to register an advisory at their address to inform first responders of a residents' disability. In 2016, Mrs. Lytle began instructing First Responder Training teaching 358 first responders in the Spokane community about autism and how to help individuals with autism in the event of an emergency. The ISAAC Foundation also introduced the Special Needs Station Visit Training which has helped familiarize over 50 special needs and neurotypical children with first responders, their uniforms, and their vehicles since its introduction in 2015. The ISAAC Foundation's experience helping first responders and youth with autism learn to interact with one another make them highly qualified to carry out this project.

The total cost to fund the development and installment of the First Responder Training Curriculum will amount to \$10,000. Your investment of \$10,000 will go a long way to help local youth with autism and first responders develop critical skills that can be lifesaving in the event of an emergency. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Conclusion

It is relevant and significant for both individuals with ASD and first responders to receive interactive training for developing these necessary life skills, since schools in the area do not provide this opportunity. The ISAAC Foundation's curriculum program will develop these much needed relationships. Again, our request is \$10,000 which will be going to a fully prepared and competent organization in order to prepare a curriculum that will address the community's needs for ASD children. Receiving the grant before the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year will be the key to having the curriculum fully developed according to our quickly-approaching timeline, and discovering your foundation with its goals and values in align with our cause was an incredibly fortunate catch.